



# United States Army Recruiting Command

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## **Former N.W. Ayer copywriter receives Army medal for 'Be All You Can Be'**

FORT KNOX, Ky. - Earl Carter, a former N.W. Ayer copywriter who created the Army's "Be All You Can Be" theme and advertising strategy, received the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal during a U.S. Army Recruiting Command annual awards banquet Jan. 23 in Nashville, Tenn.

U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, the guest speaker, said he and many of his peers "grew up with 'Be All You Can Be.'"

"It's a great slogan, and it continues to be a great slogan. Thank you for that," he said to Carter during his remarks.

Creating "Be All You Can Be" was not about creating an ad slogan for the Army, Carter said.

"It was about people."

Carter received the medal from Lt. Gen. Dennis D. Cavin, commanding general of the U.S. Army Accessions Command. Cavin was an aide to the late Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, who originally approved the Army's "Be All You Can Be" campaign, which went on to become one of the most successful in advertising history.

"Mr. Carter and I were in the room together (with Gen. Thurman) when the very first lines of that song were played," Cavin recalled.

The award, authorized by Maj. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, read in part: "Your slogan and creative advertising strategies were featured in song lyrics, television, radio, and print advertising for nearly two decades, 'Be All You Can Be' encouraged America's young men and women to serve their country. Your efforts directly contributed to the successful establishment of the All-Volunteer Army."

"As I stand before you I see a new Army, a better Army. I'm proud of what 'Be All You Can Be' accomplished. But I know today's Army doesn't need to be told those words," said Carter, a resident of New York City, who most recently worked in Singapore as a Creative Group Head for AKQA, Singapore.

Dr. Lewis Sorley, a retired Army officer and award-winning military historian, recommended Carter for the award.